

VZCZCXR07837
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DE RUEHOU #0703 2461223
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5358
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHMFIISS/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS OUAGADOUGOU 000703

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAID ECON PREL PGOV UV

SUBJECT: FLOODING SUBSIDES AS EFFECTS MOUNT

¶1. Summary. The rains in Ouagadougou have stopped for the time being, giving some much needed respite to the city. Nonetheless, damage is wide-spread and over 150,000 people have lost their homes. Relief efforts continue as the government and donors work to identify present conditions, key needs and the most appropriate responses. End Summary.

¶2. Prime Minister Zongo reported on TV and radio September 2nd that the total number of people in Ouagadougou who have lost their homes to the floods is 150,000. (This is about 10% of Ouaga total population.) Of this number, 110,000 are being lodged in schools, mosques, churches, government buildings, etc. Up to 20,000 more are expected to be lodged in this manner, while another 20,000 are estimated to have sought shelter with friends and relatives.

¶3. The Minister of Social Action reported that there were 93 such temporary shelter sites but that this number was excessive and difficult to support. She said that efforts are underway to consolidate so that there are fewer sites to support. NGOs are devising plan to divide up work among themselves to support specific sites.

¶5. Survey work is underway to ascertain the extent of the damage to bridges, dams, water drainage canals, etc. The Prime Minister said that twelve city bridges suffered damage and three of these bridges could no longer be used. The central hospital also suffered from severe flooding and is not yet in operation.

¶6. The national water company says that city water is potable but many parts of the city (include where the Embassy is located) still do not have water. The electric company says its main generators were flooded and it is working around the clock to restore electricity to those parts of the city that are still without power.

¶7. Five flood-related deaths have been reported thus far, several due to buildings collapsing on top of people. Yesterday, there were reports of a couple of multi-story buildings collapsing. The weather service reports that there is a strong probability that more rain will fall within 24 hours.

¶8. Post is coordinating with local authorities and other donors on how to best meet current and anticipated needs. Clearly the government of Burkina Faso will need considerable help in trying to alleviate the effects of this disaster.

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